

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

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FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6784

S E C R E T SAIGON 15960

EXDIS

PASS SECDEF, JCS, AND THE WHITE HOUSE

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MASS, VS
SUBJ: MASF TO MAP IS NOT FOR VIET-NAM

REF: A. STATE 160286 B. SECDEF 9255 DTG 111654Z AUG 73
C. SAIGON 15958

1. IN RESPONSE TO REFTELS, THE DAO AND OTHER ELEMENTS OF THE EMBASSY HAVE WORKED URGENTLY TO PUT TOGETHER THE REQUESTED PRESENTATIONS FOR FY 75 (REF A) AND FOR FY 75-79 (REF B). THE FY 75 MATERIAL FOR THE DEPARTMENT IS CONTAINED IN REF C. THE MAIN ELEMENTS OF DAO'S 5-YEAR PROJECTION ARE NOW SCHEDULED TO REACH CINCPAC SEPT 7.

2. WE HAVE ADDRESSED THIS QUESTION AS REQUESTED BUT AS OUR WORK PROGRESSED, IT BECAME INCREASINGLY CLEAR TO ME THAT IN THE EXISTING AND FORESEEABLE CONDITIONS, ACHIEVEMENT OF THE US OBJECTIVES IN VIET-NAM WOULD SIMPLY BE IMPOSSIBLE IF WE WERE EITHER CONFINED BY THE DOLLAR GUIDELINES GIVEN IN REF B OR BY THE CONSTRAINTS OF A CONVERSION TO MAP FROM MASF. THE STRUCTURE OF MAP WAS NOT INTENDED FOR THE SITUATION IN VIET-NAM. TO TRY TO COPE WITH THIS MAJOR CONCERN OF AMERICAN POLICY WITHIN THE OMB DOLLAR CEILINGS AND THE INEVITABLE AND INESCAPABLE RESTRICTIONS OF MAP PROCEDURES, IS FOLLY OF SUCH PROPORTION THAT IT VERGES ON STUPIDITY AND I SIMPLY WILL NOT PARTICIPATE IN A PROCESS WHICH WILL LEAD US DOWN THE PRIMROSE PATH OF SELF-DECEPTION UNTIL IT MAY
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BE TOO LATE TO DO WHAT MUST BE DONE.

3. I HAVE, THEREFORE, INSTRUCTED THE STAFF TO PROJECT MAP REQUIREMENTS ON THE BASIS OF WHAT IS NEEDED WITHOUT REFERENCE TO

THE DOLLAR GUIDELINES. THE RESULTING FIGURES, AMONG OTHER THINGS, EMPHASIZE THE ABSOLUTE NECESSITY OF KEEPING MASF, AT LEAST FOR THE NEXT TWO YEARS. THE CRUCIAL IMPORTANCE OF THIS TO THE COMPLETION OF OUR NATIONAL OBJECTIVES IN VIET-NAM, AND THE CRITICAL NEXT TWO YEARS, MERITS THE CONSIDERATION AND JUDGMENT OF HIGHEST LEVELS OF THIS GOVERNMENT. WE SIMPLY MUST MAKE A MAJOR EFFORT TO KEEP OUR ASSISTANCE TO VIET-NAM UNDER FLEXIBLE AND PROMPT-REACTION PROCEDURES OF MASF. I CONSIDER THIS QUITE WITHIN THE REALM OF THE POSSIBLE, BUT WE HAVE TO SERIOUSLY START TO WORK ON IT-- NOW. THERE ARE WELL-DISPOSED ELEMENTS IN CONGRESS BUT WE CAN'T GET THEIR VOTES BY NOT ASKING FOR THEM OR ASKING TWO HOURS BEFORE THE VOTE IS TAKEN. EVEN REPRESENTATIVE CLARENCE LONG OF MARYLAND RECENTLY IN BOTH SAIGON AND PHNOM PENH SAID THAT ALTHOUGH HE HAS BEEN A STRONG OPPONENT OF CONTINUING OUR MILITARY ASSISTANCE AND MILITARY SALES PROGRAMS, HE WILL VOTE FOR MILITARY ASSISTANCE FOR VIET-NAM AND CAMBODIA.

4. THESE ARE SOME OF THE REASONS FOR KEEPING MASF:

A. MAP WAS NOT INTENDED, AND IS TOTALLY IMPRACTICAL, FOR A COUNTRY ENGAGED IN SUSTAINED HOSTILITIES AND UNDER THREAT OF A RENEWED MAJOR AGGRESSION AS VIET-NAM CURRENTLY IS. THE CUMBERSOME PROGRAMMING AND FUNDING PROCEDURES OF MAP PRECLUDE TIMELY RESUPPLY EVEN ON THE LIMITED ONE-FOR-ONE BASIS CONTEMPLATED BY THE PARIS AGREEMENT.

B. MASF SCREENS AND LOWERS THE VISIBILITY OF OUR CONTINUING MILITARY ASSISTANCE TO VIET-NAM, THEREBY MAKING IT MORE DIFFICULT FOR THE NORTH VIETNAMESE AND OTHERS TO ENGAGE IN THEIR ROUTINE DISTORTIONS IN RELATION TO ARTICLE 7 OF THE CEASE-FIRE. THE MORE OPEN PROCEDURES OF MAP GIVE A CONTINUING GREATER EXPOSURE OF OUR ONGOING ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS, AND THE NECESSARY CONGRESSIONAL TESTIMONY AND DEBATE WOULD GIVE THE HANOI PROPAGANDISTS A FIELD DAY.

C. HEADQUARTERS COSTS, PCH&T, AND TRAINING COVERED BY THE DOD BUDGET IN THE CASE OF MASF MUST BE MET BY MAP FUNDS THUS DIMINISHING WORLD-WIDE AMOUNTS AVAILABLE FOR INVESTMENT AND O&M.
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D. MAP FOR VIET-NAM WOULD CREATE TWO MAJOR PERSONNEL PROBLEMS:

(1) THE SKILLS FOR MAP ADMINISTRATION ARE FOUND ALMOST EXCLUSIVELY IN UNIFORMED PERSONNEL WHO HAVE STAFFED THE MAAGS. THESE COULD NOT BE BROUGHT TO VIET-NAM IN SIGNIFICANT NUMBERS BECAUSE OF THE LIMITATION ON DAO UNIFORMED PERSONNEL IN RELATION TO CEASE-FIRE;

(2) IT IS QUESTIONABLE WHETHER A STAFF ADEQUATE FOR ADMINISTRATION OF THE WORLD'S LARGEST MAP COULD BE ACCOMMODATED AT ALL UNDER OUR DAO PERSONNEL CEILINGS. JUSMAG KOREA, FOR EXAMPLE, WITH A PROGRAM EQUAL TO PERHAPS 25 PER CENT OF THE PROGRAM CONTEMPLATED FOR

VIET-NAM, CONSISTS OF OVER 400 AUTHORIZED SPACES.

E. A LARGE VIET-NAM MAP WOULD BE CONTINUOUSLY VULNERABLE TO "RAIDING" BY MAP ADMINISTRATORS TO MEET SHORTAGES IN OTHER COUNTRY PROGRAMS.

F. ADDITIONS TO A REQUIREMENT OF SOME \$1.34 BILLION FOR VIET-NAM TO THE CURRENT REQUEST OF SOME \$650 MILLION FOR ALL OTHER COUNTRIES CREATES SUCH AN OBVIOUS DISTORTION THAT IT WOULD ENCOURAGE DISPROPORTIONATE CONGRESSIONAL CUTS WHICH VIETNAM WOULD HAVE TO SHARE WITH OTHERS TO THE LOSS OF ALL. THIS WOULD BE TRUE EVEN IF VIET-NAM MAP WERE, AS SOME HAVE PROPOSED, A SEPARATE LINE ITEM IN THE MAP LEGISLATION.

G. AND, PERHAPS, MOST IMPORTANTLY, THE TRANSFER OF VIET-NAM MILITARY AID FROM MASF TO MAP WOULD SIGNAL TO THE ENEMY A LESSENERED US COMMITMENT TO GIVE FULL SUPPORT TO THE GVN AND COULD ENCOURAGE THE NORTH VIETNAMESE TO MOUNT ANOTHER MAJOR OFFENSIVE ACTION OR TRY TO RAISE THE LEVEL OF SUBVERSIVE VIOLENCE WITHIN SOUTH VIET-NAM.

5. OVER THE YEARS, NOTABLY IN THE OFFENSIVE OF 1972, THE ENEMY HAS TAKEN CRIPPLING LOSSES. DESPITE HIS CONTINUING BELLIGERENT POSITION HE HAS A NUMBER OF WEAKNESSES AND VULNERABILITIES. AT THE SAME TIME, THE GVN IS SLOWLY CONSOLIDATING ITS POLITICAL POSITION AND HAS SHOWN ITSELF MILITARILY ABLE TO HANDLE THE NORTH VIETNAMESE
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WHEN IT HAS THE NECESSARY EQUIPMENT AND OTHER DEFENSE RESOURCES. US OBJECTIVES IN VIET-NAM ARE WELL ON THE WAY TO ACHIEVEMENT. THEREFORE, I SIMPLY WILL NOT ACCEPT THE FACT THAT SOMETHING SO VITAL TO THE FINAL CONSOLIDATION OF THAT ACHIEVEMENT CAN BE SO LIGHTLY THROWN AWAY SIMPLY BECAUSE WE DO NOT MAKE THE EFFORT WE ARE CAPABLE OF MAKING ON THE HILL. NO ONE DEPARTMENT CAN DO IT ALONE, BUT A CONCERTED WELL-PLANNED, WELL-COORDINATED EFFORT BY THE WHITE HOUSE, STATE AND DEFENSE CAN CERTAINLY GET MASF FOR VIET-NAM EXTENDED TO THE END OF FY 1975.

6. BUT IT WON'T GET DONE IF WE KEEP WRINGING OUR HANDS AND TELLING EACH OTHER HOW DIFFICULT IT IS AND WE MUST PREPARE FOR A FALL BACK TO MAP AS A CONTINGENCY. IF ONE REALLY SENIOR LEVEL PERSON WHO KNOWS THE HILL IS GIVEN A CLEAR DIRECTION THAT IT IS MASF NOT MAP FOR VIET-NAM AND IS GIVEN THE CAPABLE ASSISTANCE OF ONE THOUSANDTH OF THE MAN HOURS WE HAVE ALREADY WASTED IN THIS EXERCISE, THERE WILL BE NO DOUBT OF THE OUTCOME.

7. I MAKE NO APOLOGY FOR THE BLUNTNESS OF THIS MESSAGE. IT'S TIME WE ADJOURNED "THE CHILDREN'S HOUR" AND GOT BACK TO SERIOUS BUSINESS. MY ASSIGNMENT FROM THE PRESIDENT WAS TO KEEP THIS COUNTRY AFLOAT, VIABLE, AND INCREASINGLY CAPABLE OF STANDING ON ITS OWN FEET. I TAKE THE PRESIDENT'S INSTRUCTIONS SERIOUSLY. IT CAN BE DONE. I INTEND TO DO IT. AND I MUST HAVE MASF AT

LEAST THROUGH FY 1975. IF THE REST OF THE WASHINGTON BUREAUCRACY
TAKES THE PRESIDENT'S INSTRUCTION AS SERIOUSLY AS WE DO HERE,
WE WILL GET IT.
MARTIN

NOTE BY OC/T: NOT PASSED SECDEF,JCS.

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